

S. He tells what the snow was like. As snow is always white when it falls, we can learn that wool was generally white in that country, for the snow is likened to it. Wool is light, and so was the snow, just as it is here. The hoar frost covering the ground looks grayish like ordinary ashes, as the skiff of frost is always thin. The ashes of the poet's time and place must be grayish, as they generally are at the present time—when they are wood ashes more especially.

S. Hailstones are spoken of as junks of ice. They must have had hail storms there too.

S. And it must have been very cold sometimes, for no one is supposed to be able to resist the cold. I suppose they would have to go into a house, or cover themselves up with extra clothing.

S. As in Job's time, the phenomena are referred to as something inexplicable, as something done by God, as a miracle.

T. Well, perhaps so, we feel as if we would like to have more references to the phenomena in these times, in order to be able to picture fully what the world looked like then and there. Now let us take a Swedish picture: *Fridthjof at Sea*—

From the cold sky's field
Snows intense prevail,
And on deck and shield
Rattling storms of hail.

Lo, o'er all the vessel flying,
Night has placed her sable pall,
As in rooms where dead are lying,
Gloomy darkness covers all.
Wave implacable now lashes
Toward his doom the sailor brave,
White-gray as with sifted ashes
Frightful yawns a boundless grave.

—Tegner's "Fridthjof's Saga" (Holcomb).

S. "White-gray as with sifted ashes" is very like the Hebrew comparison we had.

T. And there are many other very evident thoughts suggested by the passage; but we must go on with as many of the passages which you have found as we have the time for.

S. Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the field,
Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farmhouse at the garden's end.

—Emerson—*The Snow-Storm*.

T. What is the boldest figure here?

S. The sound of the storm coming from the trumpets of the sky, I suppose.

S. Through the sharp air a flaky torrent flies,
Mocks the slow sight, and hides the gloomy skies;
The fleecy clouds their chilly bosoms bare,
And shed their substance on the floating air.

—Crabbe—*Inebriety*.

T. The boldest figure here?

S. The clouds baring their chilly bosoms.

S. Out of the bosom of the air,
Out of the cloud-folds of her garments shaken,
Over the woodlands brown and bare,
Over the harvest-fields forsaken,
Silent, and soft and slow
Descends the snow.

—Longfellow—*Snow-Flakes*.

T. Here we have the cloud folds of the bosom of the air shaken out. But don't mistake the poet's picture to mean that the store-houses of the snow are the folds of the garment, much less that this is a scientific explanation of the origin of snow.

S. This passage is poetic and it comes one step nearer the scientific conception of the origin of snow, I think, and is none the less beautiful on that account:

Lo, sifted through the winds that blow,
Down comes the soft and silent snow,
White petals from the flowers that grow
In the cold atmosphere.
These starry blossoms, pure and white,
Soft falling, falling, through the night,
Have draped the wood and mere.

—George W. Bungay—*The Artists of the Air*.

T. Very good. That poet has seen the snow crystals, and in his mind's eye sees them growing in the atmosphere. And he sees all that others see also. But our time is up. One more passage—picturing the scene when the storm is over, if you have got one.

S. One from Emerson:

Come see the north-winds masonry,
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tide, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door,
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, naught cares he
For number or proportion.

T. Very good. Some time we must pick out all the striking figures, and classify them. But it might be a good thing for you to try to make some rhymes on the snow yourselves now. If you do, I suppose some of you will endeavor to describe what you see exactly and literally say, like this:

The crystals of snow came down all day
And on the frozen ground they lay,
Until they heaped up as you see,
In great white banks some two feet three.

These might be all facts true to the letter, and there is good rhyme; but it is not good poetry. We must put the pictures in, the figures, and if they are pretty ones the poetry is pretty. It should be true also. That